

REMARKS

Amendments to the Specification

The specification, as filed, matches that of the parent application, U.S. Serial No. 08/939,656, as filed. The basis for each of the amendments to the specification made herein is self-evident.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Request for Declaration of Interference

A Preliminary Amendment and Request for Declaration of Interference with U.S. Patent No. 6,200,451 was filed with the present application on March 13, 2002. To facilitate the Examiner's consideration of this request, Applicants herewith submit draft Forms PTO-850. Applicants hereby invite the Examiner to consider using these draft memoranda as models for proposing interferences between the present application and U.S. Patent No. 6,200,451.

As noted in the Preliminary Amendment and Request for Declaration of Interference, Applicants further request that the Examiner evaluate U.S. Patent Applications Serial Nos. 09/251,641 and 09/821,205, both of which are related to U.S. Patent No. 6,200,451, and consider whether interfering subject matter exists with respect to the present application and, if so, to prepare similar memoranda proposing interferences by substituting the data for these applications for that of U.S. Patent No. 6,200,451 on replicas of the enclosed forms.

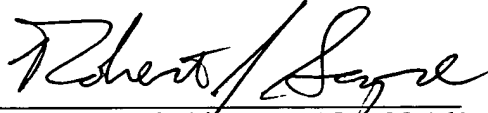
Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants are also filing an Information Disclosure Statement concurrently with this Preliminary Amendment. The references listed on the Information Disclosure Statement are those that are of record in the prosecution of this application's parent (USSN 08/939,656).

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request that the above amendments be entered and that the application receive favorable consideration in view thereof. If there are any questions regarding these amendments and remarks, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



A. Jason Mirabito, Reg. No. 28,161
Robert J. Sayre, Reg. No. 42,124
Attorney for Applicants
c/o MINTZ, LEVIN
One Financial Center
Boston, Massachusetts 02111
Tel: (617) 542-6000
Fax: (617) 542-2241

Dated: May 31, 2002

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

In the amended text, below, deletions are struck through and additions are underlined.

The paragraph beginning at page 14, line 14, has been amended as follows:

A particularly preferred immersion silver plating method is described in our copending British application filed on even date herewith under the application number 9425030.5, and subsequent U.S. Serial No. _____ (~~attorney docket no. A0626/7001~~) 08/932,392.

The paragraph beginning at page 15, line 7, has been amended as follows:

The contact time of the plating solution with the metal surface is sufficient to form plated metal surfaces over the metal. Generally the contact time will be from 10 seconds to 10 minutes. A contact time of less than 10 seconds has generally ~~being~~ been found to give insufficient coverage with silver coating and although the contact time may be longer than 10 minutes, no additional benefit has been found from a contact time of longer than 10 minutes.

The paragraph beginning at page 18, line 9 has been amended as follows:

The concentration of tarnish inhibitor in the solution comprising tarnish inhibitor, will generally be from 0.0001 % to 5% by weight, i.e., 0.001 to 50g/l. Preferably, the amount of tarnish inhibitor will be from 0.005 to 3% by weight, and most preferably from 0.01 to 2% by weight, or even below 1% by weight.

The paragraph beginning at page 19, line 17, has been amended as follows:

In a further aspect of the present invention there is provided a displacement metal plating process in which a relatively less electropositive base metal is plated with a relatively more electropositive coating metal by contact with an aqueous plating composition containing ions of the more electropositive metal, a ~~completing~~ complexing agent for such ions and a tarnish inhibitor for the more electropositive metal so as to form a coating of the more electropositive metal.

The paragraph beginning at page 19, line 25, has been amended as follows:

In this aspect of the invention there is also provided ~~is~~ a new plating composition containing ions of a metal which can be displacement plated, a ~~completing~~ complexing agent for the ions, preferably present in higher than equimolar amounts as compared to the metal ion, and containing a tarnish inhibitor for the ~~said~~ metal, and being substantially free of reducing agent capable of reducing the ions to the metal.

The paragraph beginning at page 20, line 10, has been amended as follows:

The plating composition used in this aspect of the invention may be a an immersion plating composition based on any plating composition used in the PCB industry.

The paragraph beginning at page 24, line 7, has been amended as follows:

This invention has been found to provide considerable advantages in preventing tarnishing and conferring humidity resistance on the bare boards produced ~~to~~ so that additional protection is provided between the bare board manufacture stage and the component-attachment stage. Solderability is found to be enhanced.